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ABSTRACT

Data gathered in three Delphi rounds indicated a dichotomy between 12 inservice supervising teachers and 12 preservice teachers at Emory University in their reports of sources of anxiety within the school setting. Preservice teachers reported concerns focused primarily on pupils and pupil-teacher interaction. Inservice teachers had anxiety primarily because of various out-of-class aspects of teaching. Suggested alterations in the preservice and inservice teacher program are minor and involve increasing each group's awareness of the sources of anxiety for the other and providing formal and informal sessions for coping with anxiety. Samples of the survey forms used in the research are appended. (Author/LH)

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SOURCES OF ANXIETY WITHIN THE SCHOOL SETTING AS REPORTED BY EMORY UNIVERSITY PRESERVICE AND INSERVICE TEACHERS

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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The Emory University Preservice/Inservice Program is one which stresses field work as a major component. Supervising teachers are carefully screened according to rigorous criteria because they serve as the in-class (or clinical) supervisors for preservice teachers as well as enrolling as students in the graduate program. Preservice teachers spend at least part of their time during three academic quarters in schools. Therefore, what happens in the field setting is of great importance in both the inservice and preservice teachers' programs of study.

Casual observation of student written journals as well as conversation in and outside of class yelds a preponderance of words like "tense," "nervous," and "frustrating." Students appear to be substantiating Coates and Thoresen's (1976) conclusion from research: "Anxiety appears to occur with considerable frequency and is an important concern among beginning and experienced teachers" (p. 175).

Because the field experience is a significant portion of the preservice and inservice teacher's program at Emory and because there appears to be anxiety for these teachers, a descriptive study to examine factors within the school setting contributing to anxiety for preservice and inservice teachers was undertaken and is reported herein.

That the problem is significant and that descriptive research which can be used for decision making is appropriate is indicated by Fuller and Brown (1975):

> Becoming a teacher is complex, stressful, intimate, and largely covert, but in accomplishing this demanding task teachers do not feel helped by teacher education. What laymen, legislators, and education students have been claiming for decades may be true: teacher education is orthogonal to the teacher. (p. 25)

Sample

The sample for this study consisted of a total of 12 inservice supervising teachers and 12 preservice teachers enrolled at Emory University during the spring quarter of 1979. The inservice teachers were all females and included two secondary teachers and ten elementary teachers. Two of the preservice teachers were male. All of the preservice teachers except one were assigned to elementary schools in grades K-7. Both preservice and inservice teachers were involved in field work in schools (public or private) in the Metropolitan Atlanta area.

Limitations

This study was not based on an operational definition of anxiety. The term was used in soliciting information; clarification of any specific meaning was neither sought nor given. Therefore, it is assumed that there were many interpretations of anxiety.

Also, while the study investigates sources of anxiety, it does not deal with the degree to which anxiety is felt generally or specifically with regard to any particular cause.

Finally, the parameters within which sources were to be examined were limited to the school setting.

Method

The Delphi Technique was chosen as the method of organizing the study because it allows each person to participate individually and independently of influence from any opinion leaders or peers.

Preservice and inservice groups were separated for all phases of the study. Because several days lapsed between Delphi rounds, groups were cautioned not to discuss their opinions or participation with others in either group.

Three Delphi rounds were followed and the procedure was the same for both preservice and inservice groups.

Round I

During round I, participants were introduced to Delphi as a data gathering technique. They were then told to list those things which were for them sources of stress and anxiety within the school setting.

Round II

The items listed during round I were compiled into master lists separately for preservice (see Appendix A) and inservice teachers (see Appendix B). Teachers were then asked to rate each item according to its contribution to his/her anxiety in the school setting using a scale from 1 to 5:

1 contributes very little
2 contributes somewhat
3 neutral or I'm not sure
4 contributes quite a bit
5 contributes greatly

Round III

Items which had average ratings of 3.5 or greater during round II were listed separately for preservice (see Appendix C) and inservice teachers (see Appendix D). Teachers were then instructed to rank order the items, using a 1 to indicate the most significant cause of stress and anxiety and using only one number per slot. Preservice teachers ranked fourteen items; inservice teachers ranked nine items.

Results

Round I

Because round I was only an initial listing procedure which resulted in the instruments included in Appendices A and B, further presentation of the results of round I will not be made.

Round II

The ratings given during round II were averaged by item. Fourteen of the items generated furing round I had an average of 3.5 or greater according to preservice teachers responses (Table 1).

Nine of the items listed in round I had average ratings of 3.5 or greater from inservice teachers (Table 2).

Round III

Rankings given items were averaged by item. The range of averages was 5.92 and 11.42 for the fourteen items on the preservice teachers' list. The exact averages are reported in Table 3.

The range of averages for the nine items on the inservice teachers' list was 3.16 and 6.11. The average obtained for each item is reported in Table 4.

Table 1

Preservice Ratings of Fourteen Items With Average of 3.5 or Higher

Item	Average
Observation by other teachers	3.50
Discipline - when to use what techniques	3.50
Motivating slow students	3.50
Child with behavior disorder or emotional problems	3.52
Open classroom - noise	3.67
Parental interference	3.67
Class control	3.67
Older children, unsupervised, running over class	3.67
Fights among kids at recess	3.75
Children not following directions	3.83
Students "nit-picky" obstinate, aggressive	4.25
Not having own class (trying to adapt to other teacher's style; not knowing what they think)	4.33
Not having enough time to help each child as much as he/she needs to be helped	4.50

Table 2

Inservice Ratings of Nine Items With Average of 3.5 or Higher

Item	Average
Being a good model at all times	3.67
Long hours	3.67
Leaving school early for graduate courses	3.78
Lack of money for materials and improvements	3.78
Paperwork	3.78
Handing over responsibility of your children to someone else	3.78
No planning time	3.89
Administrators who forget what it means to be teachers	4.00
Time to meet all needs	4.44

Table 3

Rank-Order, Preservice

Item	Average
Children not following directions	5.00
Not having enought time to help each child as much as he/she needs to be helped	6.08
Needing to correct individual students repeatedly	6.17
Students "nit-picky" obstinate, aggressive	6.25
Class control	6.58
Child with behavior disorder or emotional problems	6.83
Discipline - when to use what techniques	7.00
Open classroom - noise	8.21
Not having own class (trying to adapt to other teacher's style; not knowing what they think)	8.91
Motivating slow students	9.33
Fights among kids at recess	9.42
Older children, unsupervised, running over class	10.00
Parental interference	10.17
Observation by other teachers	11.42

Table 4

Rank Order Averages of Items for Inservice Teachers

Item	Average
Lack of money for materials and improvements	3.16
No planning time	3.33
Time to meet all needs	3.42
Handing over responsibility of your children to someone else	3.83
Being a good model at all times	3.92
Administrators who forget what it means to be teachers	4.56
Paperwork	5.67
Leaving school early for graduate courses	5.67
Long hours	6.11

Discussion

There is an interesting dichotomy between preservice and inservice teachers' responses regarding sources of anxiety within the school setting. In their review of the literature, Coates and Thoresen (1976) also found a difference between beginning (including student) teachers' concerns and the concerns of experienced teachers. However, the data obtained in this study is unlike that summarized by Coates and Thoresen (1976), especially for preservice teachers.

Preservice

According to Coates and Thoresen (1976), student teachers indicated that relationships with supervising teachers and college supervisors were major sources of tension. Other self-reported concerns centered around maintaining discipline in the classroom, students' liking of them, their knowledge of the subject matter, what to do in case they make mistakes or run out of material, and how to relate personally to other faculty members, the school system and parents. In general, these are areas characterized by Fuller and Brown (1975) as "survival concerns" (p. 37).

For the preservice teachers in this study, the fourteen entries receiving a rating of 3.5 or higher on Delphi round II include five items which could be considered related to the "survival concerns":

Not having own class (trying to adapt to other teacher's style; not knowing what they think)

Observation by other teachers

Class control

Discipline

Parental interference

The nine remaining items deal with what Fuller and Brown (1975) label "teaching situation concerns" and "pupil concerns" (p. 37). These items include:

Open classroom - noise

Child with behavior disorder or emotional problems

Students "nit-picky" obstinate, agressive

Children not following directions

Fights among kids at recess

Needing to correct individual students repeatedly

Motivating slow students

Not having enough time to help each child as much as he/she needs to be helped

The items which were subsequently ranked in round III as greatest sources of anxiety were

Children not following directions

Not having enough time to help each child as much as he/she needs to be helped

Needing to correct individual students repeatedly

Students "nit-picky" obstinate, aggressive

The range for these items was 5.92-6.25, so in a practical sense the items are all of relatively similar importance.

While these items may carry some overtones of survival concerns (anxieties over directions and aggression may be discipline problems), there is more evidence that the items center around what is happening between pupil and teacher.

The expression of anxiety over pupil-teacher interaction and pupil concerns may indicate that these preservice teachers are more involved with "educating students" than with putting on the performance

likely to help them survive as student teachers and be employed. While this idea initially appears desirable in many ways, it is tempered by Fuller and Brown's (1975) conclusion that "the best teachers, the most altruistic, committed, realistic, and prepared, may have the hardest time" (p. 47).

Inservice

Coates and Thoresen's (1976) summary indicates that chief sources of anxiety for experienced teachers include time demands, difficulties with pupils, large class enrollments, financial constraints, and lack of educational resources. These concerns are best described by Fuller and Brown (1975) as "teaching situation concerns."

Evaluation of the inservice teachers' responses to sources of anxiety indicates that of the nine items receiving an average rating of 3.5 or higher on Delphi round II, seven do indeed deal with concerns related to the teaching situation:

No planning time
Paperwork
Long hours
Administrators who forget what it means to be teachers
Lack of money for materials and improvements
Leaving school early for graduate courses
Time to meet all needs

One item deals with concern about pupils:

Handing over responsibility of your children to someone else.

One item is not easily categorized and may appear on the instrument because of the importance of the supervising teacher in Emory's field

program. Inservice teachers expressed anxiety over

Being a good model at all times.

The items receiving highest ranks (with a range of 3.16-3.42) were:

Lack of money for materials and improvements
No planning time
Time to meet all needs

Thus, time and finances appear to be the greatest sources of anxiety for inservice teachers.

Implications

What, if any, differences need to be made in the programs for Emory University preservice and inservice teachers? One descriptive study is hardly the basis for major revision. However, one can conjecture about minor changes which might make teacher education more resonate with the needs of teachers.

That differences exist between preservice and inservice reports of sources of anxiety may be healthy since preservice and inservice teachers who have such close, intense relationships during field work will not be prone to share and thereby increase anxieties. They also, however, may not be naturally inclined to discuss, and thereby help alleviate their different anxieties.

One obvious step that can be taken for Emory preservice and inservice teachers is to make both groups aware of anxiety that is generally associated--both through folklore and research--with teaching. Further, these persons should be made aware of the fact that preservive and inservice teachers may have and often do have different sources of anxiety within the school setting (Fuller and Brown, 1975; Coates

and Thoresen, 1976). They should be encouraged to talk with one another about their anxieties and ways in which the teachers and/or the field setting might be altered to reduce anxiety.

Because the sources of anxiety embedded in the school setting are not always easily changed, it might be beneficial to provide teachers with ways of coping with their anxiety. Because teacher educators to not necessarily have the expertise required, it seems wise to schedule some sessions of the seminar associated with field work for presentations by a psychologist or psychiatrist.

That these suggestions are tentatively worded is intentional. The data do not yield a complete summary on what exists in terms of teacher anxiety for Emory teachers. Further, as Fuller and Brown state, "almost nothing is known about teacher education as an intervention" (p. 52). Therefore, this study needs to be a first step in both finding out what does exist and in determining appropriate actions.

Summary

The descriptive data gathered in three Delphi rounds indicate that there is a dichotomy between preservice and inservice teachers enrolled at Emory University in the spring quarter of 1979 in their reports of sources of anxiety within the school setting. Preservice teachers reported concerns which focused primarily on pupils and pupil-teacher interaction. The inservice teachers had anxiety primarily because of out-of-class aspects of teaching.

Suggested alterations in the current program for preservice and inservice teachers are minor and involve (1) increasing each group's awareness of the sources of anxiety for the other and (2) providing sessions on coping with anxiety. Further data collection is advocated.

REFERENCES

Coates, T.J. and Thoresen, C.E. Teacher anxiety: A review with recommendations. Review of Educational Research, 1976, 46(2), 159-184.

Fuller, F.F. and Brown, O.H. Becoming a teacher. In K. Ryan (Ed.) Teacher education. Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education, 1975.

APPENDIX A

_____ Tension between administrator and teachers

_____ Faculty meetings

_____ Time structure for ex-curricular teachers (they're not on time)

_____ Open classroom - noise

_____ Child with behavior disorder or emotional problems

_____ Groups working inside and outside classroom simultaneously

_____ Students "nit-picky" obstinate, aggressive

_____ Not having own class (Trying to adapt to other teacher's style; not knowing what they think)

_____ Eating lunch with students

_____ Trying to teach two groups

_____ Children not following directions

_____ Children not finishing work

_____ Writing detailed lesson plans

_____ Location of teacher's desk in room

_____ Two grades in same classroom

_____ Children from different SES than any experienced before

_____ Lunchroom manager "nasty" if error in lunch procedure

_____ No overhead or opaque projectors

_____ Older children, unsupervised, running over class

_____ Fights among kids at recess

_____ Money being stolen

_____ Observation by other teachers

_____ Class control

_____ Discipline - when to use what techniques

_____ Constant need to impress others to get future job

_____ Needing to correct individual students repeatedly

_____ Motivating slow students

_____ Knowing that students have to be promoted according to criteria

_____ Incompetencies and mistakes of supervising teacher

_____ Gossipy teachers

_____ Extra duties

_____ Bells

_____ Low grades

_____ Unreasonable rules

_____ Classroom arrangement

_____ Time schedule

_____ Relationships among teachers

_____ Parental interference

_____ Unclear expression of what is expected of student teacher

_____ Not having enough time to help each child as much as he/she needs to be helped

APPENDIX B

Externs

____ Teacher cliques
____ No planning time
____ Overprotective parents
____ Paperwork
____ Red tape
____ Long hours
____ Collection of monies
____ Teaching in an intern room
____ Unruly children
____ No free lunch
____ Discipline
____ Time to meet all needs
____ Low pay
____ Teacher-parent relationship
____ Overcrowdedness
____ Views of other teachers
____ Confrontations with students who feel that teacher is being unfair
____ Administrators who forget what it means to be teachers
____ Parents with conflicting educational philosophies
____ Being a grade chairperson
____ Lack of professional behavior and knowledge by principal
____ No standards for professional promotion or salary assignment
____ Trying to work on same staff as spouse
____ Children who seem to have walls between them and teacher
____ Lack of money for materials and improvements
____ Problems with preservice teacher
____ Classroom appearance when preservice teacher is responsible
____ Lack of upward mobility in job
____ Class interruptions by loud speakers
____ Having students late to class and needing to repeat everything
____ Providing make-up work for students who are absent
____ Realizing ther's too much to teach and you'll never get through it all
____ Poor motivation by administrator
____ Lack of faculty room or private place for conferences
____ Lack of playground equipment and space
____ Inadequate classroom space for special teachers
____ Recommending grade placement
____ Leaving school early for graduate courses
____ Being a good model at all times
____ Handing over responsibility of your children to someone else

APPENDIX C

Rank-Order, Preservice

_____ Open classroom - noise

_____ Child with behavior disorder or emotional problems

_____ Students "nit-picky" obstinate, aggressive

_____ Not having own class (Trying to adapt to other teacher's style; not knowing what they think)

_____ Children not following directions

_____ Older children, unsupervised, running over class

_____ Fights among kids at recess

_____ Observation by other teachers

_____ Class control

_____ Discipline - when to use what techniques

_____ Needing to correct individual students repeatedly

_____ Motivating slow students

_____ Parental interference

_____ Not having enough time to help each child as much as he/she needs to be helped

APPENDIX D

Externs

_____ No planning time

_____ Paperwork

_____ Long hours

_____ Administrators who forget what it means to be teachers

_____ Lack of money for materials and improvements

_____ Leaving school early for graduate courses

_____ Being a good model at all times

_____ Handing over responsibility of your children to someone else

_____ Time to meet all needs